

REGULAR NORTH PROVIDENCE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

JUNE 25, 2008

The North Providence School Committee met on June 25, 2008 at 5:13 p.m. in the Administration Conference Room at the High School. Members present were Chairman Martinelli, Mrs. Reall, Mr. Marciano, Mr. Cataldi, Mr. DaSilva, Mr. Iannetta, and Mr. Palmieri. Also present was Superintendent Ottaviano and Mr. Scungio. Ms. Celona, Dr. Gerardi, Mr. Lynch and Mr. Milazzo were present for the regular session only.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Cataldi to recess the regular session and go into Executive Session at 5:13 p.m. for the purpose of discussing the Superintendent's Contract, Correspondence from the Police and Fire Department, Legal Advice on a Budgetary Issue, Legal Advice on the Kindergarten Policy, NRIC Lease Agreement for 2008/2009, and the Tenure Policy. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Marciano, aye; Mr. Cataldi, aye; Mrs. Reall, aye; Mr. DaSilva, aye; Mr. Palmieri, aye; Mr. Iannetta, aye; Chairman Martinelli, aye. Chairman Martinelli read the appropriate sections of R.I.G.L. for each of the items to be discussed in Executive Session.

The meeting reconvened at 6:45 p.m. It began by saluting the flag. Next, Chairman Martinelli asked for a moment of silence.

Next was the Chair to Report Out Any Votes Taken In Executive Session. Chairman Martinelli reported that there were no votes taken in Executive Session.

Next was Correspondence.

Motion by Mrs. Reall, seconded by Mr. Cataldi and carried to accept the recommendation of the Police and Fire Chiefs as outlined in their correspondence.

Next was the Superintendent's Report. First was the Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy Approval. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Policy. She added that this is the second reading and the corrections will be added for the coming school year.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to approve the Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy.

Next was the Tenure Policy. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Policy as submitted. She added that this is the second reading.

Motion by Mr. Cataldi, seconded by Mr. Marciano and carried to accept the Policy as submitted.

Next was the Home Schooling Requests. Superintendent Ottaviano turned the meeting over to Dr. Gerardi. Dr. Gerardi recommended approval of the Home Schooling Request by Patricia Donatelli for Brooke Donatelli.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to approve the Home Schooling Request by Patricia Donatelli for Brooke Donatelli as submitted. Mr. Cataldi voted nay to this motion. The motion carried by a vote of 6 to 1.

Next was the NRIC Lease Agreement for 2008-2009. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Agreement as submitted.

Motion by Mrs. Reall, seconded by Mr. DaSilva and carried to accept the NRIC Lease Agreement 2008-2009 as submitted. Chairman Martinelli voted nay to this motion. The motion carried by a vote of 6 to 1.

Next was the Monthly Financial Report. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the June 25, 2008 Monthly Financial Report.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mrs. Reall and Mr. Cataldi and carried to approve the June 25, 2008 Monthly Financial Report as submitted.

Next was School Committee Reports. First was Employee Recognition. Chairman Martinelli spoke about receiving a report about an outstanding intervention on the part of Chris Rizzo. He added that it is great to see that we have people in the system that go above and beyond every day. It is a great opportunity to recognize Chris. Chairman Martinelli opened the floor to comments by the Committee. Mr. Marciano thanked Chris for putting himself in harm's way. Mr. Palmieri wanted to make it clear that Chris had no idea what was going on. He does not like the limelight but deserves to be recognized. Mrs. Reall boasted that he was another one of her students. Chairman Martinelli read the citation and thanked Chris Rizzo. Everyone stood and applauded Chris as he accepted his citation.

Next was the Superintendent's Contract. Mr. Iannetta recommended approval of the Personnel Subcommittee recommendation as amended regarding the Superintendent's contract as submitted to the Committee.

Motion by Mr. Iannetta, seconded by Mr. Cataldi and Mr. Marciano and carried to approve the Personnel Subcommittee's recommendation regarding the Superintendent's Contract. Chairman Martinelli and Mr. Palmieri voted nay to the motion. The motion carried by a vote of 5 to 2. Chairman Martinelli offered congratulations.

Next was Full Day Kindergarten. Mr. Palmieri thanked everyone for

supporting the kindergarten program. The full day kindergarten was voted on last month and is moving forward. He added that he is proud of North Providence for doing this. It is important to the children. The Committee is going to work hard to find the money and will do what we have to do.

Motion by Mr. Cataldi, seconded by Mr. Marciano and carried to defer the matter to the Finance Committee to do what they have to do to reconcile the budget and to do whatever has to be done to implement the full day kindergarten program.

Chairman Martinelli added that for four years, he has been an advocate for full day kindergarten and he is proud that we have full day kindergarten. The vote has gone through and the program is going forward. He thanked everyone who worked so hard.

Next was Public Comments on Agenda Items 3-5. Chairman Martinelli asked if there were any comments. Mr. Aiello identified himself as a resident of North Providence for twenty-seven years. He first asked about the contract for the Superintendent. Mr. Iannetta, Chairman of the Personnel Subcommittee, spoke about the basics of the contract, which is 3.5%, 3.75%, and a minimum of 3.5% in the last year. Mr. Aiello asked where the Superintendent started from. Mr. Iannetta said that the Superintendent Ottaviano is current at \$111,671.00 which is a 3.5% increase. For 2008/2009, her salary will be \$115,859.00. The salary for 2009/2010 will be a minimum increase

of 3.5%, which would be \$119,900.00 minimally. Chairman Martinelli added that the Superintendent is currently the 2nd lowest paid in the State! Next, Bob asked about the all day kindergarten. He said that he was in favor of full day. He asked what the votes were for. He said that there were two votes for this issue and one had one person vote against it and the other had two people vote against it. He asked what they were voting against. Chairman Martinelli asked for clarification from the recording secretary. He then explained that the vote on the full day kindergarten was to defer the financial piece to the Finance Committee to work out the budgetary issues. He added that the Finance Committee will resolve the budgetary issues. Mr. Marciano clarified that the vote on the Superintendent's Contract was 5 to 2 with Chairman Martinelli and Mr. Palmieri. The second vote was for the Northern RI Collaborative and Vito voted nay to the motion.

Next was Requests to Address the Committee.

Ms. DiMarzio introduced herself and stated that she does not agree with the decision for full day kindergarten. She was never informed of the decision to implement full day kindergarten and thought that her daughter was going to attend half-day kindergarten. She asked the Committee to reverse their decision. Mr. Palmieri reminded her that he spoke with her on the phone regarding this issue. There will be a policy for half-day kindergarten for this year only. Chairman Martinelli also spoke about the fact that all the issues will be

resolved.

The policy will address all the concerns. The policy was put in place by legal counsel and the Superintendent and half-day kindergarten will be an option. Mr. Marciano spoke about the fact that he felt that this would be an option without researching it but it turned out that his feeling was correct. We are fine-tuning the policy.

Next, Gina Picard introduced herself as a resident of the Town residing at Six Hickory Road. She thanked the members of the Committee and added that it has been a long road to get to this point. She continued that she understands the concerns with respect to fiscal responsibility. She spoke about the Collaborative surplus of seven million dollars and the fact that they cannot hold it and they will have to give it back. She suggested that the goal is to have the Committee working together to get the program started efficiently and effectively. She also suggested that when the Committee is looking at the Policy for Kindergarten, it

needs to take into consideration the needs of the children in 1/2 day kindergarten. Chairman Martinelli corrected Ms. Picard's statement by stating that the Collaborative has 3.3 million dollars. North Providence's share will be approximately four hundred thousand dollars. We currently owe the Collaborative more than that and we can only apply our share to our debt which will basically be a wash. Mr. Marciano also spoke regarding the kindergarten issue. The program will be designed to meet certain criteria in the morning and

to cover the core information that the students need.

Next was New Business. First was Bids. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the Bid for Athletic Equipment and Supplies be awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for each item.

Motion by Mr. Cataldi, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried to award the bid for Athletic Equipment and Supplies to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder for each item. Mr. Marciano added that Grogan Marciano is no relation to him.

Next was the bid for Custodial Services and Materials. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the bid be awarded to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, M.D. Stetson Company, at the negotiated price.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried to award the bid for Custodial Supplies to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder, M.D. Stetson Company, at the negotiated price.

Next was the Bid for Fire Escapes. Superintendent Ottaviano turned it over to Mr. Milazzo, who requested that the Committee authorize him to be able to negotiate with the bidder to get the best price.

Members of the Committee asked questions regarding the bid. Mr.

Cataldi asked if there is enough money in the capital budget? Mr. Milazzo said that there is enough. Mr. Marciano asked the record to reflect that the vote is based on the fact that this is the only bidder and add the caveat authorizing Mr. Milazzo to negotiate a better price.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried to award the bid for Fire Escapes to the one and only bidder, Fire Escape Services, and to authorize Mr. Milazzo to negotiate the best price.

Next was Resignations. Superintendent Ottaviano announced that this resignation saddens her but she is happy for the person. She recommended that the Committee accept with regret the resignation of Robert J. Gerardi, Ph.D. effective August 14, 2008. Mr. Marciano spoke about hating to see Dr. Gerardi go. He felt that he is probably one of the finest individuals he has ever met. He did his job quietly and humbly and is a gentlemen and a class act. He thanked him for the things he has done for the District and expressed his regret that Dr. Gerardi is leaving. Mrs. Reall personally thanked Dr. Gerardi for all the time he spent with her in the office working on the annual report and told him that he is a class act. She wished him the best of luck in his new position. Mr. DaSilva wished Dr. Gerardi good luck in his new job and added that their gain is our loss. He also felt that Dr. Gerardi's big accomplishments was in student instruction and achievement. Mr. Iannetta felt that the entire North Providence School system is thankful for his dedicated hours and wished him good luck in his new job in Woonsocket. Mr. Palmieri felt that if there

is one person that he really hates to see go, it is Dr. Gerardi. He asked him if he really has to go. Chairman Martinelli spoke about the fact that on more than one occasion he worked late hours. He felt that Dr. Gerardi showed fortitude, commitment and passion and that he has never seen a more dedicated worker. He added that it is with great regret that the District is losing him. Everyone applauded Dr. Gerardi. Dr. Gerardi spoke about this being a bittersweet decision. North Providence is a great organization and his experience in the District helped him to qualify for the next step.

Motion by Mr. Cataldi, seconded by Mr. Marciano, Mr. DaSilva, and Mrs. Reall and carried to accept with regret the resignation of Robert J. Gerardi, Ph.D. effective August 14, 2008.

Next, Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the Committee accept the resignation of Jason Miller, NPHS Assistant Football Coach effective May 28, 2008.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to accept the resignation of Jason Miller, NPHS Assistant Football Coach effective May 28, 2008.

Next was Retirements. Superintendent Ottaviano read a list of Mr. Costabile's accomplishments and recommended approval of the resignation of Angelo Costabile – North Providence High School Math Teacher Effective the end of the 2008/2009 School Year.

Mr. Marciano spoke about working with Mr. Costabile for many years and the positive influence he had on people. When he taught math, the SAT scores were good. He added that the District is losing a great teacher. Mrs. Reall added that he is a sterling teacher – he is Mr. North Providence High School. He is a very special person and North Providence High School is blessed to have him. Mr. Iannetta concurred with his colleagues. Mr. Costabile was all business – he spent thirty-five years with him and the students said that they learned more in his calculus class than in college.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to accept with regret the resignation of Angelo Costabile – North Providence High School Math Teacher Effective at the end of the 2008/2009 School Year.

Next was Layoff Recisions. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended rescinding the layoffs as submitted in the School Committee packets.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to rescind the layoffs as submitted in the School Committee packets.

Next was Appointments. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended that the Committee grant advice and consent to the appointments, which were voted on as follows:

Motion by Mr. Cataldi, seconded by Mrs. Reall and Mr. Iannetta and carried to grant advice and consent to the appointment of David Andreozzi – NPHS Assistant Football Coach Effective June 26, 2008; Giana Nassi – NPHS Dance Coach Effective June 26, 2008; Delores Paesano – NPHS Class Advisor Effective June 26, 2008; and Brendon Valle-NPHS Girls' Soccer Coach Effective June 26, 2008 pending certification.

Next was Old Business. There being none, the next item on the Agenda was Use of Property Requests. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the Use of Property Requests as submitted.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and Mrs. Reall and carried to approve the Use of Property Requests as submitted.

Next was Approval of Bills. Superintendent Ottaviano recommended approval of the List of Bills as presented.

Motion by Mr. Marciano, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried to approve the June 20, 2008 List of Bills as presented.

Next was Approval of Minutes.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mr. Marciano and carried to

approve the Minutes of the May 28,2008 Executive Session as presented and kept closed in accordance with R.I.G.L. 42-46-4 and 42-46-5.

Motion by Mr. DaSilva, seconded by Mrs. Reall and carried to approve the Minutes of the May 28, 2008 Regular North Providence School Committee Meeting as presented.

Mr. DaSilva asked if the recorder was purchased and whether or not it was being used. The clerk stated that it was recording the meeting. Mr. DaSilva felt that the minutes for the March 26, 2008 were sparse.

Next was Public Comments on Agenda Items 7-12. Gina DiFonte of 21 West River Parkway spoke in reference to Ms. DiMarzio's request and felt that it is important to know that the children will be registered for full day kindergarten for the Fall. She asked for the same guarantee given to Ms. Dimarzio that the children will be enrolled in Full Day Kindergarten for the Fall. Chairman Martinelli assured her that the Committee is done with the issue and that full day kindergarten is going forward. He added that the Committee is not going to turn back and the decision was made to move forward. Mr. Palmieri gave his guarantee that full day kindergarten is going forward. Mrs. Reall spoke about the rumors that seem to get out that the some of the Committee members were going to change their vote.

She reminded everyone that the vote was taken and this is a democracy.

Next, Ken Cicerone asked questions regarding the approval of bids. He asked about the lowest bidder on custodial supplies. Superintendent Ottaviano informed him that the bidder was the lowest and only bidder for custodial supplies. Also, there was only one bidder for Fire Escapes. The Committee authorized Mr. Milazzo to negotiate a better price. Mr. Cicerone asked who determines who the lowest responsive and responsible bidder is and said that he is not putting his request in writing. Mr. Scungio explained that it depends on who sent the bid out. It could be Linda Celona and the Superintendent or several people based on the bid specs. Linda Celona explained the process she uses to determine the responsive and responsible bidder for each bid, such as materials and supplies for the classrooms or athletic supplies. She added that she works in conjunction with different people based on the individual bids to determine the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. She gave the example of athletic supplies and spoke about meeting with the athletic director to determine the quality of each item that a vendor bids on. With respect to classroom materials and supplies, there is a standard that is used. Many of the bids are part of the State bid process and the District is required to use the State bid. Mr. Cicerone asked who determines the most responsible bidder. Mrs. Celona spoke about the reference process and explained that each bidder is asked to provide references and the references are contacted. Mr. Cicerone asked about the First Student bid. Mrs. Celona stated that the bid was before her time.

Superintendent Ottaviano spoke about Laidlaw being bought out by First Student and the District was not credited for some of the payments. Presently, the balance is approximately \$300,000.00. Last month, the balance was \$600,000.00. She added that this is not unusual. Mr. Cicerone asked about the custodial supplies and the why there was only one bidder. He also spoke about the construction at the High School. Chairman Martinelli explained to Mr. Cicerone that the Committee followed the statute. Mr. Scungio gave Mr. Cicerone a general explanation regarding the specs given based on a specific set of needs and all of the requirements that need to be met, such as qualifications, insurance, references. Mr. Cicerone stated that he worked in the school in 1978 and the work was given to anyone they wanted by saying they were the responsive and responsible bidder. Mr. Scungio again stated that the bidder needs to meet all the criteria. He felt that it is incumbent on the Town to hire someone that can prove that they can do the job in accordance with the specs. If a bidder gives a very low price, it can be suspect to see if that bidder will be able to get the job done properly. Most of the time, the bids are awarded to the lowest bidder. The bid would be questioned if the bidder does not meet all of the specs. If a bidder feels that the process was not fair, they have the ability to sue the Town. With respect to the vestibule, the job was reviewed after it was done by an independent company and it was determined that the bidder provided quality construction at the lowest price. Mr. Milazzo added that the bid for the vestibule was the lowest price.

Next, Donna Alcazar of 38 West River Parkway submitted a petition for Christina Piroli, a long term substitute at Stephen Olney School. She felt that Ms. Piroli would be an ideal candidate for one of the teacher spots and that she has done an incredible job. She was recently voted teacher of the year by her peers and if she is hired, the parents would love to see her stay at Stephen Olney. She added that Ms. Piroli was actively involved with the IEPs for the students and made sure that the IEPs were successful. She presented the petition to Chairman Martinelli.

Next, Bob Aiello introduced himself as a resident of the Town for 27 years residing at 18 Barry Court. He spoke about the promises made for full day kindergarten and half day kindergarten and felt that there are pros and cons to this and someone is going to be hurt. Chairman Martinelli explained that we are in the process of going through the budget. Mr. Marciano added that he understands Mr. Aiello's concerns but they are premature at this point. Mr. Aiello spoke about the people of the Town taking time out of their busy schedules to be at the meeting and that they deserve an answer to their questions. Mr. Marciano talked about Mr. Cataldi's motion that the Finance Committee meet to look at the budget to figure out how much money is needed and where it will come from. The figures change daily and the District is getting State Aid as well as other money.

Next was Pending Business.

Chairman Martinelli announced that before adjourning the meeting he would like to recognize former School Committee member, Thomas Norato.

Motion by Mrs. Reall, seconded by Mr. Iannetta and carried to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald Iannetta